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THE MANCHU CONQUEST OF CHINA

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The expulsion of the Tartar dynasty which ruled China for two centuries and a half has excited the sympathetic approval of the civilized world. That dynasty had been tried in the balance and found wanting; under its rule the largest and potentially the richest homogenous empire in the world had been reduced to impotence by foreign powers, its resources neglected, its people mistreated. A summary of their shortcomings does not, however, set forth the meaning of the Manchu conquest of China, or explain the remarkable nature of their achievement. To estimate their place in history fairly it is necessary to review the course of that conquest and consider its effect upon the welfare of the people whom the Manchus inadvertently rescued from a condition bordering upon anarchy. A brief account of the conquest and settlement of this northern race is all that this paper contemplates. The expansion of China under their rule, and the revived prestige of a mighty nation acquired from the exercise of a higher sense of racial control than the Chinese themselves were capable of, are subjects belonging to another chapter of this story. The decadence of the Manchus—apparently an inevitable result of their contact with a higher culture—should not blind us to the extraordinary success of their great performance.

Nurhachu, the founder of the high fortune of this clan, was born in 1559 in Hutuala, the capital of a small principality among the Great White Mountains, north of the Korean border. Here his ancestors of the Aisin Gioro (Golden Dynasty) had ruled for two centuries from the time of their founders, one of the “Kings” of the Nūjen Tartars. The relationship of these peoples to the Kin and other Tartar conquerors of northern China in the Sung

period is somewhat obscure, but they belong to the same race that had been driven from China by the Mongols in the thirteenth century and relapsed more or less into barbarism in the wooded mountains between the Yalu and Sungari Rivers. China under the Mings had been fairly successful in holding them to the east of the Liao Valley while protecting her own settlers in Laiotung by garrisons in a line of border fortresses, but this fertile region was often harassed by bands of Tartar robbers. It was in pursuance of the characteristic policy of setting these predatory gangs upon one another that the empire finally engendered the genius of one of the great fighting chiefs of Asiatic history and ultimately brought about its conquest by his successors.

A khan of one of these tiny septs secured the help of the Chinese frontier guard in laying siege to a town ruled by a man who had married the granddaughter of Hülen, chieftain of Hutuala, Nurhachu's grandfather. The old man hastened with his son and heir to assist the princess, but being decoyed outside of the walls by a ruse of the Chinese captain, both were slain together with most of the garrison. Nurhachu thus became the head of his house at the age of twenty-four. The Chinese officer appears to have exceeded his instructions by embroiling the Bai, or Imperial Frontier Count, in the murder of these clansmen, and Nurhachu received the bodies of his father and grandsire as well as presents of considerable value, together with investiture in his chieftainship and the title of *Tu tuh*—the same as that now given to the military governors of the provinces. Instead, however, of surrendering the murderer of his father the Chinese made him lord of all the Manchu clans, which placed the young chief in a position of extreme danger and caused him to devote his energies to attacking his enemy and revenging himself upon the treacherous Chinese. Three years later, by drilling and improving his forces, he had so strengthened his position that the Chinese thought it wise to deliver up his enemy Nikan for execution, and to make a treaty that opened better trading facilities to his people. Next year, in 1587, he built Laocheng

a few miles from his ancestral capital, with a palace and court after the Chinese manner, and governed so wisely as to bring the five Manchu clans in a few years to recognize him as king.

From this time to the end of his reign his career was one long succession of raids and conflicts brought about by the jealousy of his neighbors and his own determination to create an army that might become an instrument of his vengeance upon the Chinese. As a fighting chieftain he developed all those traits of *élan*, endurance and personal bravery that are common enough in history to excite no special surprise. He had the qualities of a Sivaji or a Skanderbeg, and these alone are sufficient to account for his ultimate conquest of people of his own kind in the vast wilderness between the Pacific, the Amur and the Mongolian steppe, roughly half a million square miles. What arrests attention, however, is the extraordinary capacity revealed in this Berserker fighter for the administration of his conquests and the assimilation of the sundry tribes within the region. The prestige of his victories attracted the soldiers of conquered tribes, who learned under a severe but generous leader the advantages of discipline and union. By 1606 he had even aroused the admiration of the Mongols beyond the Lao, whose Beiras sent him a complimentary embassy. Ten years later he had assumed the style of *Tienming* in his new capital at Hingking, and ruled his domain with the panoply and circumstance of a Chinese emperor. The assumption of this state was inevitably regarded as a challenge by the Chinese, whose policy it had always been to prevent the border tribes from uniting, and to recognize no titles among them that were not bestowed by the Ming suzerain. But Nurhachu revealed in his daring plans the political genius which has been a characteristic of his race in all ages, and which European observers have too often ignored. That race under various names has impressed us with its fighting powers, its endurance and its brutality; we have not recognized, however, its ability to assimilate and control its conquered subjects by methods which, barbarous and imperfect as they may some-

times appear, have, during the period of the Christian era wrenched the government of every civilized Asiatic state from its own people and governed them on the whole with advantage. As Parthians, Mamluks, Mongols, Seljuk and Ottoman Turks, to leave the lesser breeds unnamed, the distant congeners of the Manchus have not only invaded but repeatedly controlled all the civilized nations of the continent. The history of China cannot be properly understood unless due notice is taken of the impact of her northern neighbors from the period of the great Ch'in to recent times, nor can we afford to neglect the fact that her own great dynasties and governing element have come from those northern provinces which are chiefly peopled by descendants of a Tartar-Chinese intermixture.

Nurhachu, though he never entered China, stands as an exponent of the highest qualities of his race, a creative genius not only in strategy but in politics, the founder of a great tradition capably maintained for two centuries by his descendants, the establisher of a line of monarchs which have been surpassed by no other ruling house during an equal period in China.

The Chinese had reason for serious apprehension if Nurhachu succeeded in his purpose of reducing all the Tartar clans to his way. He had left them in no doubt as to his intention, when this was accomplished, of driving them behind the Great Wall, and in 1617 he published an open defiance to them by drawing up and burning with sacrificial ceremonies a document known as the "Seven Hates," including amongst the charges their murder of his parents, their interference with Manchu autonomy, their assistance rendered to his enemies, their assassination of an envoy and harassing of his farmers—"for all of which," he concludes, "I hate you with an intense hatred and now make war against you." They took him at his word, for while engaged, in 1619, in a war with the last of the Nūjen states that continued to resist him, a Chinese army of 200,000 was assembled at Mukden and marched in four divisions against the little state of Hingking. With only 60,000 men he proceeded, by the same tactics that Napoleon employed,

to attack each of these divisions with his whole force before assistance could be got from the others. The result of the five days' battle, known as that of Sahu, was a complete and extraordinary victory for the Manchus and the annihilation of the Chinese army, with a loss of 45,000 men slain on the field. Yet, though his success secured for him unquestioned authority over the Nüjen tribes that had held out against him, the Chinese troops soon recovered their *moral* under an able general, who fortified the towns of Liaotung so successfully that for two years Nurhachu did not venture to attack him. The bravery of the Chinese is noticeable throughout these campaigns. What defeated them ultimately was the removal of energetic generals and the unconscionable turpitude of the eunuch control under which the Peking government had fallen. In 1621 Mukden and Liaoyang with seventy walled cities were captured and the Manchus for the first time established in control of the whole territory which foreigners have ever since called by their name. The Chinese never gave up the contest, but they were badly led by dull and cowardly generals sent by the palace politicians. Nevertheless the resistance was always determined. They lost the country west of the Liao down to the Great Wall, but regained most of it within four years under a competent leader called Sun Cheng-tsung, who fortified Shanhai kwan and Ningyuen. It was in 1625, during this period when his military advance was checked, that Nurhachu removed his palace from Liaoyang to Mukden—his sixth capital—and built the imperial headquarters which the dynasty has ever since regarded as its home. The transfer of the administration from the original tribal valley to this thickly settled Chinese plain was attended by a fuller adjustment of his government to the Chinese system and by an imitation of Ming ceremonial at his court. It was as natural for the princes to be educated in Chinese letters as it was for the Frankish princes to write Latin. Chinese culture was the only culture known to their world, and it was impossible for a sovereign in eastern Asia to set up his rule upon any other model or to hope for acceptance by civilized subjects unless he adopted their

institutions. The Mongols had done so, and before the Mongols every northern conqueror in China since China began to be.

But what the Mongols learned of Chinese methods during a half century of conflict, the Manchu acquired in pursuing Nurhachu's sensible policy of providing several millions of Chinese settlers in the Liao Valley with the government to which they were accustomed, and habituating their own clansmen to the language and order of a finer culture than their own. It was this policy and their consistent recognition of a superior system that enabled the Manchus to retain their hold upon China after they had effected their conquest. The conquest itself, it will be observed, was a long struggle carried on chiefly through the agency of Chinese against Chinese until the country was too exhausted to offer further resistance to the forces that stood for order. At no time did the conquerors show superior generalship or valor; in numbers their own fighting men were always vastly inferior to the Chinese; in intellectual power they were never their equals. Yet they succeeded through sheer force of character, as the Ottomans have succeeded during a much longer period in western Asia, in dominating a people that were superior to them in every important quality except that of leadership.

Nurhachu met his first and only serious check in attempting the capture of Ningyuen, which was defended by a good general and by cannon cast by Jesuit missionaries. He died soon after this, in September, 1626, and was buried in the great tomb outside of Mukden, which is still shown to travelers. In accordance with Chinese custom his personal name had been replaced by the reign title of *Tien-ming* in 1616, when he assumed the dignity of emperor. After the accession of his grandson to the throne in Peking he was given the title of Taitsu, or Great Ancestor, by which he is known in imperial histories.

His successor, a fourth son known as Taitsung, appears to have been loyally supported by numerous brothers in taking up the arduous work of carving out a kingdom and pressing down upon China. The defense of the lower Liao

was, however, maintained with much persistence by the Chinese, despite the corruption and divided councils of the Ming government, that his way to the capital remained closed, owing chiefly to the obstinate resistance of the two strong fortresses of Ningyuen and Shanhai kwan. While he cannot be granted the supreme place in the fortunes of his family that belongs to Nurhachu, the task bequeathed to him of advancing those fortunes beyond the ancestral domain was hardly less difficult than that of winning its independence. His first achievement, the conquest of northern Korea, whose loyalty to the Ming suzerain necessitated its punishment to secure his southern frontier, was completed in 1627. His other neighbors, the Mongols, presented a far more serious problem, but within ten years, between 1626 and 1636, by a series of expeditions and negotiations, he had succeeded in practically incorporating Kortsin into his own domain and obtaining the suzerainty and tribute of all inner Mongolia. Besides the obvious strategic necessity of thus solidifying his own boundaries the control of Mongolia permitted him to raid the whole northern tier of Chinese provinces across that vast border which has ever been a source of their apprehension since the beginning of recorded history. A great excursion in force was made in 1629 to the city of Peking itself, where the terrified court was besieged for some weeks and the country around laid waste, but the Chinese general with his army brought down from Shanhai kwan was able to prevent an assault and the capital was saved.

Taitsung died at the age of fifty-two in September, 1643, and was succeeded by his ninth son, a child of five, while the control of the Manchu dynasty passed into the hands of the boy's uncle Dorgun. It was a critical moment in the career of that dynasty, for dissension amongst the many able and aspiring sons of Nurhachu would have involved its ruin had a struggle amongst them for the succession begun. By continuing the line in accordance with prescribed Chinese custom, in the person of a heir of the next generation, the internal peace of the warlike band was preserved while their activity found ample scope in the sudden

and enormous expansion of their empire in the conquest of China.

Meanwhile the internal condition of the Chinese empire had become desperate under a long series of famines and rebellions which had utterly paralyzed its economic resources and brought about a general anarchy. It is impossible to decide whether under such loosely organized agencies as that of China the general prevalence of distress is a cause or a consequence of political disturbance. When thickly populous agricultural communities are reduced to starvation the people will inevitably break up into robber bands and prey upon each other to the confusion of all civil administration. No government can reduce the disorder unless provisions can be obtained to satisfy the needs of those made desperate by want; but a bad government may by its inefficiency aggravate the starving people and succumb to the forces of disruption thus let loose. It is notable that in the history of China no great upheaval has occurred without its concomitant of famine. In the third decade of the seventeenth century the northern provinces were visited by an unusually severe drought which was so badly met by venal officials that multitudes took to the mountains and attacked the roads and villages. In addition to these natural causes weakening authority in an imperfectly articulated domain, increased taxation and recurring levies of troops to meet the Manchus began in 1621 to arouse angry opposition in the western provinces. Revolts broke out which were painfully and only partly subdued. By 1631 the robber bands throughout all the inland provinces had swelled to great armies under redoubtable captains, whose successes encouraged the able-bodied to enlist under their banners and live upon the spoil of captured cities. At the end of another decade Li Tsu-cheng, a Shansi leader, after many vicissitudes, had become the greatest of them all, and with an army composed of nearly a million needy adventurers he was swarming, in 1641, over the famine-stricken province of Honan toward Peking. Despite the impotence of the imperial government in this score of years of carnage it is remarkable that the various rebel armies

met with obstinate resistance in many cities. There was no systematic opposition, yet owing to the indomitable spirit in defending their own which characterizes the Chinese people, as well as to the lack of organization among the rebels, the agony was long continued. The contrast between the Chinese rebel Li and the Manchu Nurhachu is suggestive as typical of the differing genius of the two races. It has often been said that the Chinese were conquered because they were unwarlike. They showed, on the contrary, a persistent fighting eagerness both before and after the Manchu irruption that ranks them among the martial people of the world. They failed both in rebellion and in defense because they could produce no leader capable of consolidating and fixing an orderly system of control. The Manchus succeeded, though they had to borrow and adapt the system of their enemy, because they know how to make themselves obeyed.

Peking was surrounded by the rebel host in February, 1644, and fell through sheer cowardice on the part of its defenders, lost to all sense of loyalty and shame through generations of eunuch control. The last of the Ming emperors, incapable to the end of any resolute action, committed suicide as the rebels poured over the deserted walls, and the city and palace—perhaps the richest storehouse of valuables at that time in the world—was given over to slaughter and pillage. Li put on the imperial yellow and reigned for one day in the palace, when he was called away to the north by a sudden and unexpected danger. Wu San-kwei, the ablest Chinese general that the herculean struggle against the Tartars had produced, preferring a Manchu *Hwangti* to a rebel upstart, called upon Dorgun to join him in avenging his dead sovereign. The Manchu army was hurried down to Shanhai kwan, Wu and his army were constrained to shave the forehead and adopt the Tartar queue, and preparations made for an advance upon the capital. But Li, who knew the value of keeping the aggressive, was upon them with his great host ere their forces had left the Wall. His defeat in the terrific battle that ensued before Shanhai kwan was due, it would appear, to

his carelessness in scouting, for, unaware of the Manchus drawn up among the hills on his flank, the rebels were disconcerted by their sudden advance just as they were wearing out Wu's troops by mere weight of numbers. Their route was followed up by Wu, while Dorgun and his soldiers hurried on to the dismantled capital. He placed his nephew the Emperor Shunchih upon the Dragon Throne, removing the seat of his government from Mukden as soon as the devastation of the rebel Li could be repaired.

But possession of the capital was far from giving the new dynasty control of the empire. China continued for nearly a score of years in armed revolt against her foreign conquerors, whose unity and steadfast policy, rather than any proficiency in arms, at length brought them victory. At the outset of this obstinate struggle the odds were enormously against them. The resources of the natives in men and materials were greatly superior to their own; their base, the Yellow River basin and the Great Plain, had been ravaged by years of famine and rebellion from which the southern provinces had suffered but little; loyalty to the Ming dynasty, despite its abuses, still inspired the educated class everywhere; and finally, the elements of disorder long since set loose under the robber rebellion gave free vent to that centrifugal tendency within the vast empire which has ever disposed its various provinces to fall apart, when opportunities offered, into separate governments under local adventurers. Had the fallen dynasty produced one resolute master of men capable of choosing and controlling his ministers it could at least have held the land south of the Yangtse and divided China into two kingdoms as in the days of the Sung. But China seemed to be impotent in begetting a single administrator worthy of the name; she fell at last under the domination of an inferior race because the genius of her people was unable to meet the first requirement of a true national life. Whether this failure was due to deterioration of moral fiber, the result of a civilization grown too old to revive, the future alone will show.

The Manchu regent found his first great work at hand in setting up the machinery of government in Peking and

restoring order in two of the "home provinces," Shansi and Honan; the other, Shantung, dispersed Li's rebel officials but remained for some time loyal to the Ming claimant. Li Tsu-cheng himself had to be pursued by Wu San-kwei and defeated in eight great battles during eighteen months before he ended his own life, a discredited fugitive in Hupeh. Dorgun very shrewdly proclaimed amnesty to all who would acknowledge his authority, and their old titles and emoluments to members of the old imperial household, even restoring the Ming tombs west of Peking and sacrificing to the manes of their former emperors. Many accepted his terms, but the family was large and produced a succession of futile aspirants to the throne—names to conjure with amongst a proud and loyal people, but all alike cowardly and trivial, unworthy even of sympathy in the disasters which infallibly crowned their recalcitrance. Five of these deserve mention for the trouble they created. A grandson of the famous old Emperor Wanli, known by his title of Fu Wang, was promptly recognized as emperor in the Yangtse and coast provinces, and established in Nanking, the original capital of his dynasty. A victim of the weakness which marked all the degenerates of that dynasty, he gave his days to dancing girls and the business of restoring its fortune to one Ma Shu-ying, perhaps the most rapacious and unprincipled monster of these distressful times, ignoring the advice and devotion of his minister Shu Ko-fa, a noble contrast to the favorite. Shantung, deserted by Ming incompetency, was promptly subdued, and Nanking capitulated after the flight and surrender of the pretender. About the same time another army conquered Hupeh province, and Manchu supremacy obtained throughout the country north of the Yangtse. Had it not involved the compulsory change of head-dress to the plaited queue, that supremacy might have been supported with less contumacy on the part of the Chinese. The ordinance was enforced with vigor, presumably because the Manchus found it necessary amid frequent defections to insist upon some visible sign of submission among the natives, but the imposition of such a test upon a vain and self-sufficient people like the

Chinese reveals their incapacity to understand the mind of a more subtle race when its *amour propre* is concerned.

The second pretender, called the Tang Wang, once a Ming prince of Nanyang, found temporary support in Kiangsi and Fuhkien, but it melted away through the perfidy and incompetence of his generals. His brother Yü Ngao established the imperial pageant in Canton after his destruction in December, 1646, but the city was soon captured by a surprise and he killed himself in the presence of the Chinese traitor who made him prisoner. A fourth Ming, known as the Lu Wang, had ere this set up as an opposition emperor in Chehkiang, where, partly through the assistance of pirates, he regained all of Fuhkien between 1648 and 1650; but he fell foul of Koxinga's ambitions and was drowned in 1653 at Amoy. The last aspirant for Ming leadership, Yowliang the Kwei Wang, a great-grandson of Wanli, was proclaimed emperor in Kwangsi as a rival of Yü Ngao. He was utterly worthless, like the rest, but the strength of Chinese hostility to the Manchus was revealed in 1648, when after being chased into Yunnan, a sudden resurgence of opposition throughout the whole of China swept the seven southern provinces and Szchuen under his allegiance, and the Regent was confronted with the task of reconquering the greater portion of the empire. To add to his difficulties a famine again exhausted the north, the Mongols got out of hand and raided over the Wall, the Mohammedans rose in Kansuh, and bandits swarmed in every province. In this new crisis of their affairs the dauntless Wu San-kwei was given the chief command, and very slowly the Ming supporters were pushed back by their own countrymen until the cowardly Kwei Wang fled over the Yunnan border into Burma, to be surrendered in 1661 by the Burmese and die by his own hand a captive of the great general.

The year 1661 marks the first lull in the secular resistance of China to the imposition of foreign rule. The country was conquered but not convinced. In the general wreckage of seventeen years of war it had exhausted its resources without developing a commander fit to excite an

enduring loyalty or unite the diverse desires of different sections. Under the apathy that ensued after this bitter experience the Manchus very prudently encouraged reconstruction by appointing Chinese officials chosen according to the ancient tests throughout the empire, and China returned sensibly though sullenly to her age-old life of toil under her new masters. Ten years before this date Dorgun the Regent had died, leaving Shunchi to direct the imperial policy in person at the age of twelve. We do not hear much of his intellectual endowments, but he had been nurtured in a household of sturdy kinsmen and he must have matured early to have employed his talents successfully at this age. He did in 1661 in his twenty-fourth year, leaving the empire to a son eight years old whose reign name Kanghsi is one of the most brilliant in Chinese history.

The Manchus were not ungrateful to the Chinese generals who had enabled them to win an empire. Wu San-kwei, whose pursuit of the Kwei Wang had completed the crowning performance of that great conquest, was given the title of prince and made absolute lord of the two provinces of Yunnan and Kweichow, with his own army and entire control of the civil appointments and revenues of the territory. Two other generals, both Liaotung men, were in like manner created princes of the maritime provinces of Kwangtung and Fuhkien, from which, as from Wu's domain, all the Manchu soldiery was withdrawn. Judged by the event this method of rewarding their services seems imprudent, but amid the multitude of traitors that must have made China appear to these Tartars as infected with perjury, these men had resisted the temptations to which others had succumbed and remained loyal to the end. Their honors were awarded in proportion to the magnitude of their efforts. But Prince Wu, either because he wearied of his sovereign state in a remote province, or because he was apprehensive of the imperial plans to reduce his army, after accumulating stores and revenues revolted in 1674, soon after the young Kanghsi had assumed control of the government. With him arose also the Prince Kung of Fuhkien;

and in a few weeks the empire was once more ablaze with insurrection, officials everywhere surrendering their cities and the people gladly removing their queues. Six provinces turned against their Manchu masters; a seventh, Kwangtung, remained neutral because its old Prince, Shang Ko-si was loyal, but his son Chu-sin, a drunkard, accepted the title of Great Commander from Wu, assumed the old Chinese headdress and made his aged father a prisoner. The latter died in 1676, and Chu-sin, rather alarmed at Wu's attitude toward him, made his peace with Kanghsi. The other rebel prince (of Fuhkien) after some serious fighting, was pardoned and re-employed by the Manchus in 1677, but was subsequently executed in Peking, a fitting end for his cruelty and crimes. The defection of these coast provinces, though badly led, was heartily endorsed by their inhabitants whose hatred of the Manchus has never much abated, and a considerable Manchu army had to be employed in bringing them to order. Wu San-kwei raged up and down the western provinces, where his armies at one time had possession of Shensi and even threatened Peking. So long as he lived there seemed to be a magic in the old warrior's name that paralyzed the troops brought against him. All his campaigning was carried on in the enemy's country, and though he was presently driven out of Shensi and the two Kwang, he died holding his own in Hunan, while none dared to attack his base in the southwest. During four years this indefatigable fighter had wrenched nearly half of China from Manchu control and maintained his upstart government upon the resources of the least productive portion of the empire. Kanghsi, who inherited the physical vigor of his great ancestors, was with difficulty dissuaded from taking charge of the campaign against this formidable rival in person. His counsellors were probably justified in their fears of losing Peking in an émeute if he left the capital, but his resolution in the crisis and the resources at his command—chiefly in the better fighting qualities of the Mongols and northern Chinese troops—eventually achieved a hard-earned victory over all his foes in 1681. Wu had succumbed to an illness in 1678; his grandson and

successor, Shu-fan, was beheaded upon the fall of his capital Yunnan, and his head hung upon one of the city gates of Peking. The rebellion had failed, and the emperor could congratulate himself that he had accomplished what was necessary for establishing his autocracy, the disarming of the vassal princes. So long as they retained their hereditary powers the Manchu was little more than the feudal suzerain of China. Their revolt was a declaration of the right of the Chinese to rule themselves, and in this sense these eight years were the concluding act in the bloody drama begun in 1644. To insure the future Kanghsi abolished the title of *Wang* except as bestowed upon members of the imperial clan, nor was it made hereditary even amongst these.

In the settlement of the country Manchu troops were quartered in permanent garrisons in a score of the more important cities of the empire. These "bannermen" were forbidden to intermarry with the Chinese or to engage in any occupation except that of arms. So long as these warriors were regularly exercised in their profession under the great military emperors, chasing bandits or campaigning in Central Asia, they remained a valid defence to the throne. But they never constituted an important element in the forces of the empire.¹ In later times, becoming utterly demoralized through inaction, compelled to remain aliens in spirit as well as in race to the industrious Chinese who surrounded them and to whom they represented the yoke of a foreign master, they sank into forlorn and useless drones whose descendants were the first victims of the Chinese revolution of 1911. This was Kanghsi's reply to the *intransigents* of China. He was logical, perhaps, but time, a profounder logician, proved it to be fallacious. The conquest had not in reality been effected by Manchu braves or even by Manchu wisdom, nor could the Manchus ever retain their hold upon China merely by the valor of their men. Their at-

¹ In Chienlung's reign there were 45,500 Manchu bannermen disposed in twenty towns of China Proper, 8,750 near Peking and 15,000 in eight garrisons in Turkestan, besides about 100,000 guarding the imperial palace. The total Chinese army was 662,000, besides 700,000 provincial troops.

tack was begun at an opportune moment, when a long period of Ming misrule and her reduced vitality had so distracted China as to admit of her capital being taken by a *coup de main*. The importance of Nurhachu's work of training and preparation was fully revealed in this initial success and in the admirable temper of his successors, as they employed all the factors in their favor while pushing the conquest through to an end. But these factors were for the most part Chinese: the hopeless incapacity of the Ming pretenders, the willingness of the Chinese to fight for the foreigners, the schisms that separated north from south, faction from faction, province from province, the indomitable fortitude of a courageous people when once enlisted in their cause. It was the Chinese themselves who completed the conquest of China for the Manchus; it was the Chinese who suffered them to rule because they adopted their culture and institutions and took the natives into partnership in the management of the empire. No disposition of Manchu garrisons at strategic centers could have long upheld that rule or prevented insurrections had the Tartars departed from their policy and managed their great estate selfishly. And who shall say that those who, for fear or favor, cast their lot with the Manchus decided unwisely for their country? The sovereigns of China never had a broader sense of empire or a clearer idea of the physical confines and defences of that empire than under Kanghsi, the greatest of her modern emperors, whose expansion of her boundaries and increase of her prestige made her a greater power than ever before and strong enough to save her from subjugation by the predatory states of a newly awakened Europe.